

# Research BRIEF

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## A Spotlight on Dual Language Learners in Head Start: FACES 2014

### INTRODUCTION

Recent national data highlights a shift in the racial/ethnic and linguistic composition of the child population in the United States, with Hispanic children now representing the fastest growing and largest racial or ethnic minority group (Murphey et al. 2014). The population of children served by Head Start mirrors this trend. In 1980, Hispanic/Latino children represented 19 percent of the total Head Start enrollment, but by 2014, they represented 38 percent (Head Start Program Information Report 1980, 2014). This change has been accompanied by an increase in the percentage of Head Start children who are dual language learners (DLLs)—that is, children who have a primary home language other than English. Recent data from the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) suggests that the proportion of children entering Head Start who are DLLs has increased from 17 percent in 2000 to 24 percent in 2014 (Kopack Klein et al. 2017). Understanding the characteristics and needs of the changing population served by Head Start is key to delivering responsive, high quality services.

This brief provides a nationally representative description of DLL children in Head Start, their families, and their homes at the beginning of the program year, using data from FACES 2014. This brief highlights information from the Fall 2014 Data Tables and Study Design report (Aikens et al. 2017b). In addition, this brief is accompanied by a set of appendix tables with descriptive data that are not included in the fall 2014 data table set.

We address the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of DLL children in Head Start?
2. What are the demographic characteristics of families of DLL children in Head Start?
  - How do the characteristics of families of DLL children compare to those of non-DLL children?

### DEFINITION OF DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS

We use the term dual language learner (DLL) to refer to children whose primary home language is not English. For this definition we include children who are from homes where a language other than English is spoken and their parent/guardian primarily uses that language when speaking to them. This may differ from definitions used in other studies. We use the terms “non-DLLs” and “children who are not DLLs” to refer to children whose primary home language is English. This includes children in homes in which only English is spoken and those in which a non-English language is spoken, but this language is not the primary language spoken to the child.



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3. What are the characteristics of the home environments of DLL children in Head Start?
- How do the characteristics of home environments of DLL children compare to those of non-DLL children?

To address the first research question we explore the characteristics of DLL children in Head Start. We report how many Head Start children live in a household where a language other than English is spoken (a definition of DLL commonly used in other research) and, of those, how many children are primarily spoken to in a language other than English (the definition of DLL used in FACES). Within our defined group of DLL children, we report the language in which they are primarily spoken to at home, the language they are read to at home, their level of English ability, their age, and whether they have been in Head Start one or two years. Findings from the first question provide a national portrait of DLL children served by Head Start at the beginning of a program year.

The second set of questions addresses the demographic characteristics of DLL families in Head Start. We describe parent nationality, immigration status, education, and employment status and compare the demographic characteristics of the families of DLL children to those of their non-DLL counterparts.<sup>1</sup> These findings provide insight into the unique strengths and needs of DLL families.

The third set of questions examines the characteristics of the home environments of DLL children in Head Start. Specifically, we describe household composition, income, and food security; parents' depressive symptoms; joint book reading; and learning activities in the home. We compare the home characteristics of DLL children to those of their non-DLL counterparts. These findings provide information about what, if any, differences exist in the home environments of DLL children.

## **WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF DLL CHILDREN IN HEAD START?**

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Children's language development is affected by the quality and quantity of their experiences with language, both inside and outside the home (Dickinson and Tabors 2001; Hart and Risley 1995). For DLLs, support for both English skills and home language skills is associated with optimal development across domains (Bialystok 2005; Fuligni et al. 2014). Therefore, we aim to describe the language experiences and characteristics of the DLL children served by Head Start to inform the delivery of appropriate, high quality services.

### **Home language environments and children's English ability**

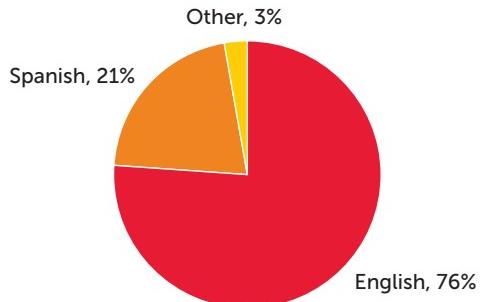
**Thirty-nine percent of Head Start children live in households where a language other than English is spoken, and 24 percent are primarily spoken to in a language other than English at home (DLLs).** Spanish is the most prevalent non-English language and is the primary language spoken to 21 percent of all Head Start children at home (Figure 1). Among DLLs, 89 percent are primarily spoken to in Spanish at home, and the remaining 12 percent are primarily spoken to in a range of other languages including African languages (2 percent), Arabic (2 percent), Native American or Alaskan languages (1 percent), or other languages (6 percent).<sup>2</sup>

**Although, by definition, parents of DLLs speak to their children primarily in a language other than English, there is variation in the language they use to read to children.** About half of DLLs are read to by parents in a language other than English (46 percent), 28 percent are read to in both English and another language, and 28 percent are read to in English only.

**About half of DLLs (54 percent) demonstrate sufficient English ability at the beginning of the Head Start program year to be assessed in that language.** That is, their receptive and expressive language skills, as demonstrated on a language screener, suggest that they can be fairly assessed in English.<sup>3,4</sup>

**Figure 1:**

**Spanish is the most prevalent non-English primary home language**



Source: Fall 2014 FACES Parent Survey.

Notes: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014.

Other category includes African languages, Arabic, and Native American or Alaskan languages, among other languages.

### Child age and Head Start exposure

**Most DLLs did not participate in Early Head Start. Most are also entering Head Start for the first time.<sup>5</sup>** Just under half (44 percent) of DLLs are 3 years old (as of September 1, 2014) and the rest are 4 years old. Almost two-thirds of DLLs (61 percent) are entering Head Start for the first time, whereas 39 percent are returning to Head Start for a second year.<sup>6</sup> Of DLLs entering for the first time, 70 percent are 3 years old and the rest are 4 years old. Of those returning for a second year, 95 percent are 4 years old and the rest are 3 years old. About a third of DLLs' parents (33 percent) report that their child had previously participated in Early Head Start.

## WHAT ARE THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF FAMILIES OF DLL CHILDREN IN HEAD START?

Prior research has consistently found that children's early development and later school success are associated with parent characteristics such as education, employment, and single parenthood (Bradley et al. 1989; Duncan and Brooks-Gunn 1997; Duncan and Magnuson 2005; Shonkoff and Phillips 2000). Head Start programs provide services tailored to support the specific needs of the families they serve. In the following section we describe the resources and needs of DLL Head Start families specifically, and draw comparisons with non-DLL Head Start families.

### Household composition

**The majority of DLLs live with both of their biological or adoptive parents.** DLLs are more likely to live with both parents than are non-DLLs (71 percent versus 39 percent). Among DLLs, 27 percent live with their biological or adoptive mother only, and not their biological or adoptive father, although other adults may be in the household.

### Parent nationality and immigration

**Although the majority of DLL children were born in the United States (96 percent), many of their parents were not.** More than three-quarters of DLLs are in families in which both parents were born outside of the United States (79 percent). Most DLLs have parents who have been in the United States for at least six years. More than two-thirds of DLLs' parents are from Mexico; another 13 percent to 14 percent are from Central America; and the rest are from South America, the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, or elsewhere. As expected, compared to non-DLLs, DLL children are less likely to have a mother (17 percent versus 93 percent) or father (11 percent versus 90 percent) born in the United States.

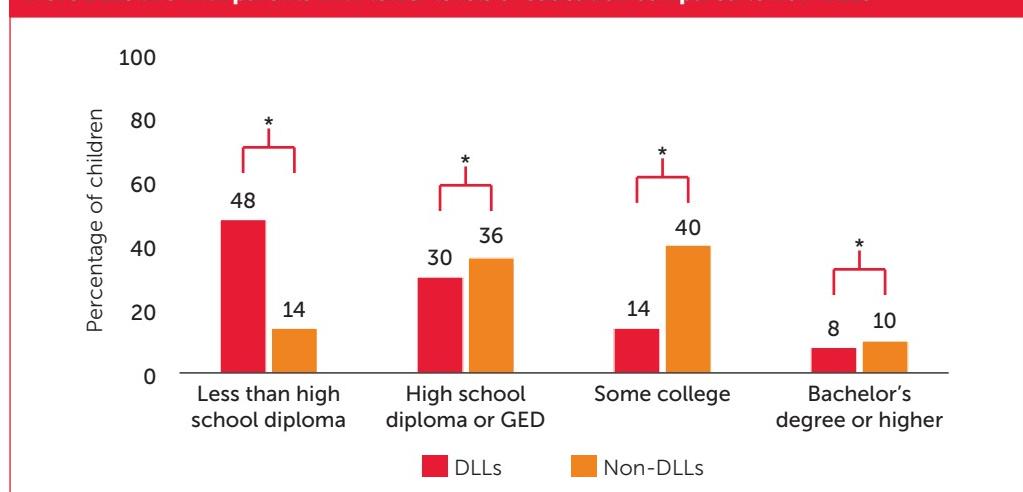
## Parent education and employment

**Thirty percent of DLLs live with at least one parent who has earned a high school diploma or GED (based on the parent with the highest education in the household).** Another 14 percent live with at least one parent who has some college, vocational, or technical training; and the remainder (8 percent) live with at least one parent who has a bachelor's degree or higher. Finally, 48 percent live in households in which no parent has completed high school. Compared to non-DLL children, DLL children are less likely to live in a household with at least one parent who has earned either a high school diploma or GED (30 percent versus 36 percent), or a parent who has some college, vocational, or technical training (14 percent versus 40 percent; Figure 2). DLL children are more likely to live in a household where at least one parent has not completed high school compared with non-DLL children (48 percent versus 14 percent). There are no differences by DLL status in the percentage of children who have at least one parent with a bachelor's degree or higher.

**Fifty-seven percent of children live with at least one parent who is working full-time, and 22 percent live with at least one parent who is working part-time (based on the parent with the highest level of employment in the household).** Six percent of DLLs live with one or more parents who are looking for work, and 15 percent live with one or more parents who are not in the labor force. DLL children are more likely than non-DLL children to have at least one parent who is employed full-time (57 percent versus 50 percent; Figure 3) and less likely to have a parent who is looking for work (6 percent versus 13 percent). They do not differ in terms of whether at least one parent is working part-time or is not in the labor force.

Figure 2:

**More DLLs live with parents with lower levels of education compared to non-DLLs**



Source: Fall 2014 FACES Parent Survey.

Notes: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014.

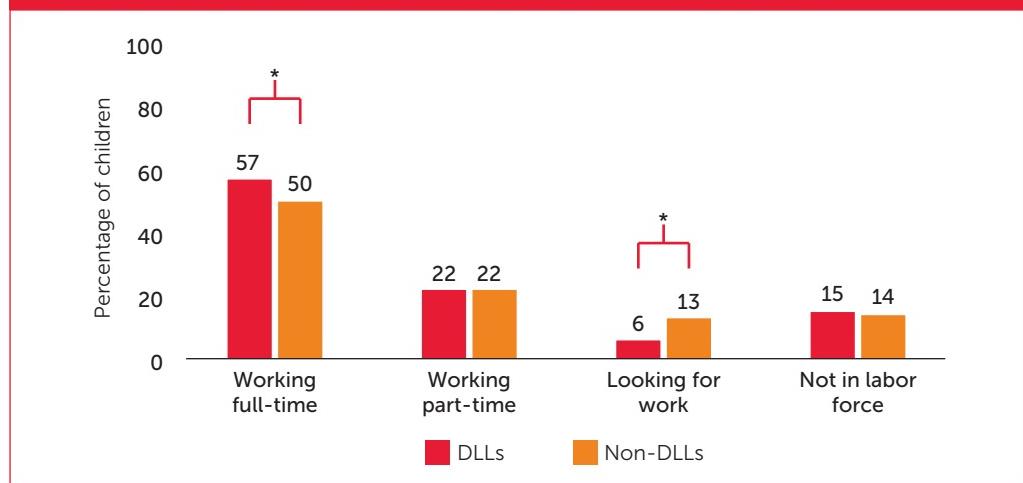
Some college includes college, vocational, or technical training.

\* Asterisk indicates that the difference between children who are non-DLLs and children who are DLLs is statistically significant at the  $p \leq .05$  level.

Parents include both biological and adoptive parents. Households that include neither a mother nor a father are not included in this figure. Data refer to the biological or adoptive parent with the highest education in the household.

**Figure 3:**

**More DLLs have at least one parent working full-time compared to non-DLLs**



Source: Fall 2014 FACES Parent Survey.

Notes: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014.

\* Asterisk indicates that the difference between children who are non-DLLs and children who are DLLs is statistically significant at the  $p \leq .05$  level.

Parents include both biological and adoptive parents. Households that include neither a mother nor a father are not included in this figure. Data refer to the biological or adoptive parent with the highest level of employment in the household.

Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

**The majority of DLLs have fathers who are employed, whereas most DLLs have mothers who are not in the labor force.** Among children who live with their mothers (either alone or with another parent), DLLs are more likely than non-DLLs to have mothers who are not in the labor force (55 percent versus 26 percent), and are less likely to have mothers who are employed full-time (17 percent versus 31 percent), employed part-time (19 percent versus 26 percent), or looking for work (9 percent versus 17 percent). Among children who live with their fathers (either alone or with another parent), DLLs are more likely to have fathers who are employed (either full- or part-time) than non-DLLs (84 percent versus 77 percent) and are less likely to have fathers who are looking for work (5 percent versus 10 percent). There are no differences by DLL status in whether children's fathers are not in the labor force.

## WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HOME ENVIRONMENTS OF DLL CHILDREN IN HEAD START?

We examine several aspects of the home environment that have been linked with child development in prior work. First, we consider family economic well-being because substantial research has linked higher family income with young children's higher achievement, fewer problem behaviors, and better executive function skills (Duncan et al. 2011; Yeung et al. 2002). In particular, family financial strain (parent perceptions of whether there is enough money to afford the kind of home, clothing, food and medical care they need) has been associated with lower executive function over and above the association between poverty and executive function (Raver et al. 2013). Research findings also indicate that food insecurity puts children age three and younger at developmental risk and can be negatively linked with older children's academic outcomes, social skills, and weight status (Jyoti et al. 2005; Rose-Jacobs et al. 2008).

Additionally, we examine parents' depressive symptoms because these can influence how a parent interacts with their child. On average, depressed mothers are more likely to display withdrawn or intrusive parenting styles, compared to their non-depressed counterparts. These parenting styles are

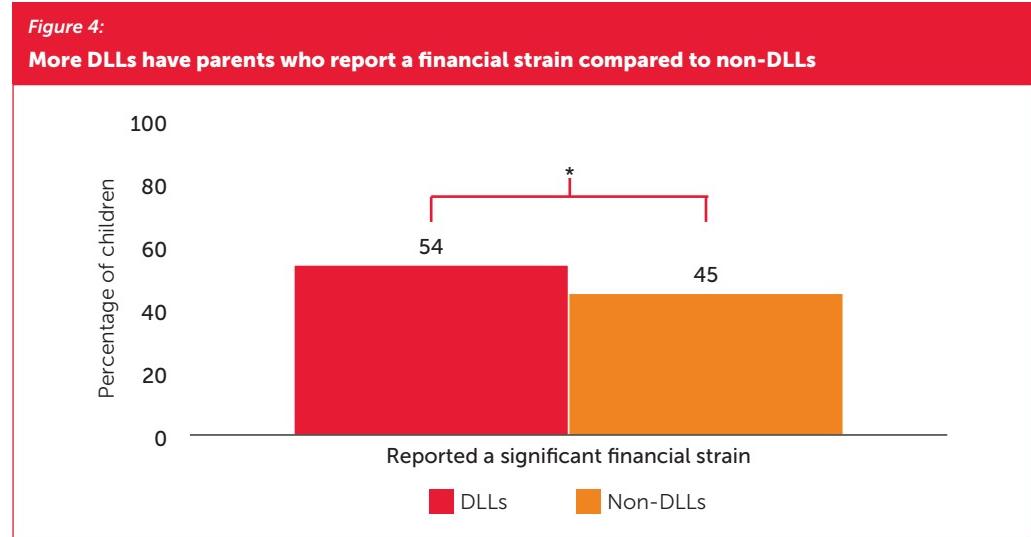
associated with children's social and emotional problems, such as internalizing and externalizing behavior problems and difficulties in reading social cues (Downey and Coyne 1990; National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement 2013; National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 2009; Shonkoff and Phillips 2000).

Lastly, we examine indicators of joint book reading frequency, home learning activities, and family routines since these parenting behaviors are associated with children's cognitive skills, social-emotional development (more positive social skills and fewer problem behaviors), and positive approaches to learning (Bradley et al. 2001; Fantuzzo et al. 2004; Foster et al. 2005; McWayne et al. 2004; Weiss et al. 2006). Research also supports associations between early literacy development and family social interactions, especially among low-income families (Dunst et al. 2006; Teale 1984). Family routines have been linked to better self-regulation, fewer problem behaviors, and stronger health and cognitive outcomes for children (Rijlaarsdam et al. 2015; Ferretti and Bub 2014; Fiese and Schwartz 2008).

### **Family economic well-being**

**Three-quarters of DLLs live at or below the federal poverty threshold.<sup>9</sup>** Thirty-one percent of DLLs live below 50 percent of the poverty threshold, and another 47 percent live at 50 percent to 100 percent of the poverty threshold.<sup>10</sup> DLL children are more likely to live in households that are between 50 percent and 100 percent of the poverty threshold than non-DLLs (47 percent versus 33 percent), and they are less likely to live in households that are between 186 percent and 200 percent of the poverty threshold (0.4 percent versus 1.4 percent)<sup>11</sup> and at 201 percent or above the poverty threshold (5 percent versus 10 percent), suggesting that DLLs are somewhat more economically disadvantaged than other Head Start children.

**More than half of DLLs (54 percent) have parents who report at least one financial strain.<sup>12</sup>** The most frequently reported strain is that parents are unable to afford the medical care that they need (42 percent). Twenty-one percent of DLL children's parents report one financial strain, 10 percent report two financial strains, and 23 percent report three or four financial strains (11 percent and 12 percent, respectively). DLLs are more likely to have parents who report at least one financial strain than non-DLLs (54 percent versus 45 percent; Figure 4). They are also more likely to be reported as

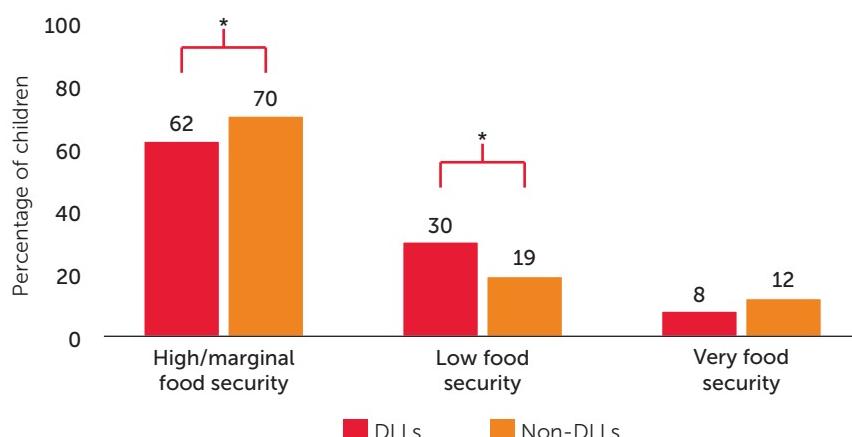


having all four financial strains in the past 12 months than non-DLLs (12 percent versus 5 percent). DLLs' parents also report different types of financial strains than non-DLLs' parents. DLL children's parents are more likely than non-DLLs' parents to report being unable to afford the medical care (42 percent versus 29 percent), food (21 percent versus 14 percent), or clothing (31 percent versus 18 percent) that they need. No other differences in financial strain by DLL status were found.

**More than a third of DLL children have parents who report food insecurity (38 percent).** Thirty percent of DLL children's parents report low food security, which indicates reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet but little or no indication of reduced food intake. An additional 8 percent report very low food security, which indicates disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake. There are differences between DLL and non-DLL children in the levels of food security experienced (Figure 5). DLLs' parents are more likely to report low food security than non-DLLs' parents (30 percent versus 19 percent). DLL children's parents are less likely to report food security (marginal to high) than non-DLL childrens' parents (62 percent versus 70 percent), that is, having no or minimal indications of food-access problems or limitations.

*Figure 5:*

**More DLLs have parents who report low food security compared to non-DLLs**



Source: Fall 2014 FACES Parent Survey.

Notes: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014.

\* Asterisk indicates that the difference between children who are non-DLLs and children who are DLLs is statistically significant at the  $p \leq .05$  level.

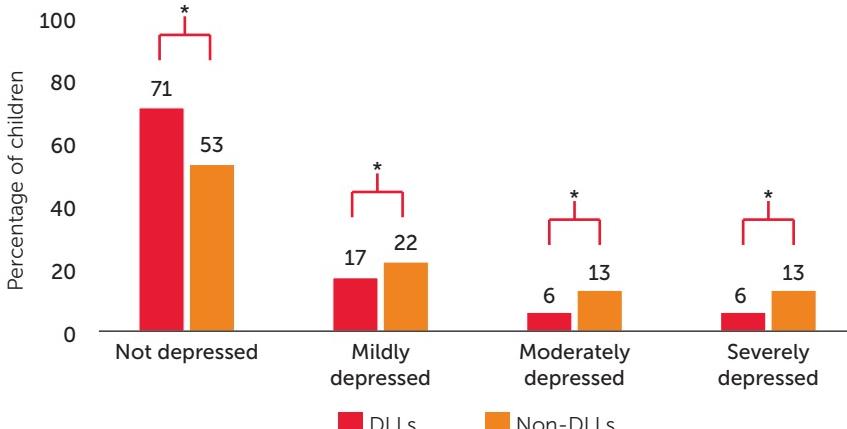
Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

### Parents' depressive symptoms

**Few DLLs have parents who report symptoms of depression.**<sup>13</sup> Six percent of DLL children's parents report symptoms of severe depression, another 6 percent report symptoms of moderate depression, and 17 percent report symptoms of mild depression. The remaining 71 percent of children's parents do not report symptoms of depression. There are differences in reports of depressive symptoms by DLL status (Figure 6). DLLs are more likely to have parents who report no symptoms of depression than non-DLLs (71 percent versus 53 percent), and their parents are less likely to report symptoms of mild depression (17 percent versus 22 percent), moderate depression (6 percent versus 13 percent), and severe depression (6 percent versus 13 percent).

**Figure 6:**

**Fewer DLLs have parents who report depressive symptoms compared to non-DLLs**



Source: Fall 2014 FACES Parent Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014.

\* Asterisk indicates that the difference between children who are non-DLLs and children who are DLLs is statistically significant at the  $p \leq .05$  level.

Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

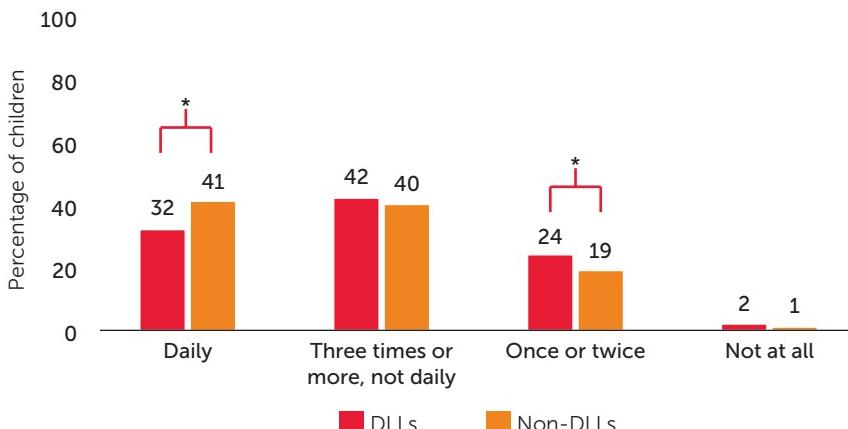
## Home learning activities and household routines

**About three-quarters (74 percent) of Head Start DLL children were read to at least three times in the past week by a family member.** Forty-two percent were read to three or more times, but not daily, and 32 percent were read to daily. Approximately a quarter of DLLs were read to once or twice a week (24 percent) or not at all (2 percent). There are differences in joint book reading frequency by DLL status (Figure 7). DLL children's parents are less likely to report reading to their child every day than non-DLL children's parents (32 percent versus 40 percent). DLL children's parents are more likely to report reading to their child once or twice in the past week than non-DLL children's parents (24 percent versus 19 percent).

**Family members of DLLs engaged in a range of home learning activities with children in the past week.** Most DLLs have parents who report they or a family member (1) talked to their child about what happened in Head Start (90 percent); (2) played with toys or games indoors (97 percent); and (3) taught their child letters, words, or numbers (95 percent). Other activities, such as playing a board or card game (34 percent) and playing with blocks (58 percent) were less common. Children who are DLLs are less likely than non-DLLs to have participated in most of the parent-reported activities with family members in the past week (Figure 8). In fact, DLL children are less likely than non-DLL children to have family members who have told the child a story (86 percent versus 92 percent); involved the child in household chores (82 percent versus 95 percent); talked about what happened in Head Start (90 percent versus 98 percent); taught the child songs or music (82 percent versus 88 percent; not shown); worked with the child on arts and crafts (54 percent versus 77 percent; not shown); took the child along on errands (92 percent versus 97 percent; not shown); talked about TV programs or videos (65 percent versus 80 percent; not shown); counted different things (81 percent versus 95 percent; not shown); and played a board game or a card game with the child (34 percent versus 44 percent) in the past week. DLLs and non-DLLs do not differ in terms of whether a family member played with toys or games with the child; taught the child letters, words, or numbers; or played blocks with the child.

**Figure 7:**

**DLLs are less likely to be read to daily compared to non-DLLs**



Source: FaFall 2014 FACES Parent Survey.

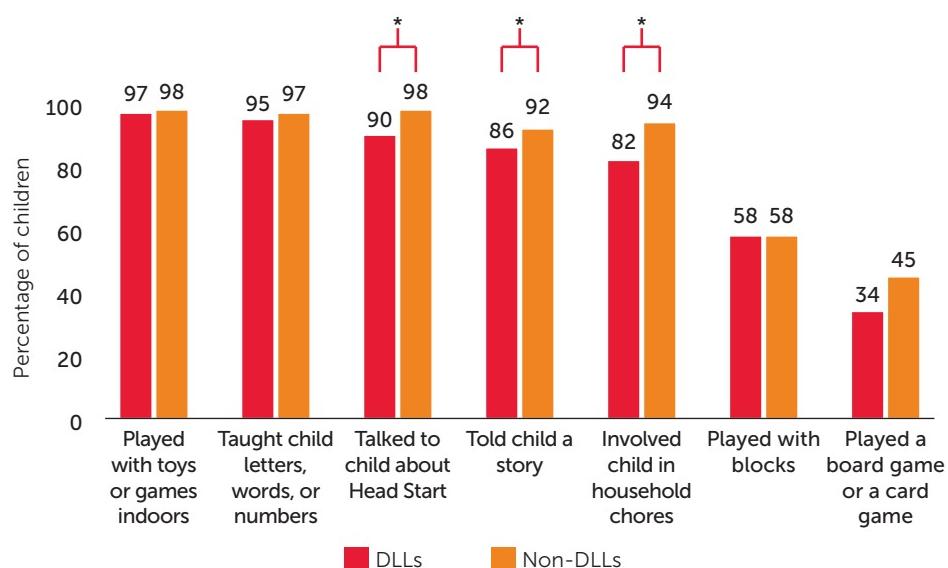
Notes: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014.

\* Asterisk indicates that the difference between children who are non-DLLs and children who are DLLs is statistically significant at the  $p \leq .05$  level.

Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

**Figure 8:**

**DLLs participate in a variety of home learning activities**



Source: Fall 2014 FACES Parent Survey.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014.

\* Asterisk indicates that the difference between children who are non-DLLs and children who are DLLs is statistically significant at the  $p \leq .05$  level.

**Forty percent of DLL children's parents report that their families eat dinner together every night.** An additional one-quarter (25 percent) eat dinner together five or six times a week. DLLs eat dinner with their families less frequently than non-DLLs. DLL children are less likely than non-DLLs

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to eat dinner with their families every night of the week (40 percent versus 51 percent). In turn, DLLs are more likely to eat dinner with their families between no and two times (11 percent versus 6 percent) and three and four times (24 percent versus 18 percent) than non-DLLs. There are no differences in eating dinner with their families five to six times per week.

## SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

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A quarter of Head Start children are DLLs—that is, children whose primary home language is not English. Understanding the family characteristics and home environments of this population is essential to delivering responsive, high quality services. Spanish is the most prevalent primary home language for DLL children. Despite primarily hearing a language other than English inside the home, about half of DLLs pass a language screener at the start of the Head Start year and are able to be assessed in English.

DLL children's families have a range of challenges and strengths, some of which differ from those of non-DLL children. For example, DLLs are typically born in the United States to parents who are from other countries and who are less educated than parents of non-DLL children. Prior research suggests that children of immigrants have diverse language experiences and family cultural values (Hernandez et al. 2008). Many of these families may experience barriers to accessing social services due to cultural or linguistic differences. At the same time, DLLs have important family resources. They are more likely than non-DLLs to live with both of their biological or adoptive parents and to live with at least one parent who is employed.

DLL children's home environments reflect a range of resources and needs. For example, three-quarters of DLLs live in families at or below the federal poverty threshold; more than half have parents who report at least one financial strain (especially related to medical care); and about one-third have parents who report food insecurity. DLLs are more likely to have parents who report food insecurity than non-DLLs. There is also some indication that DLLs are more likely to experience greater severity of financial strains that are also different in nature compared to non-DLL children. Although many DLLs have parents who report reading to their child at least three times a week and participating in learning activities in the home with their child, they are less likely to engage in a number of learning activities with children than non-DLLs, including book reading. In contrast, few DLLs have parents who report symptoms of depression—and their parents are less likely to report that they are depressed than parents of non-DLLs.

Nationally, Head Start is serving a population with diverse cultural backgrounds and needs. The Head Start program is designed to be tailored to national and local characteristics, with the intention that local programs will meet the specific needs of the populations they serve. Given that DLLs make up one-quarter of the Head Start population, understanding their specific strengths and challenges is crucial to developing responsive services. This national picture of DLLs provides information for Head Start to consider when setting goals for the program and provides a starting place for tracking the characteristics of DLLs relative to non-DLLs.

## **HEAD START FACES**

This research brief draws upon data from FACES 2014. FACES provides information at the national level about Head Start programs, centers, and classrooms, and about the children and families that Head Start serves. This brief is part of a series of reporting products describing data from the 2014–2015 round of FACES 2014. Other FACES 2014 products describe the study’s design and methodology (Aikens et al. 2017b), the characteristics of Head Start children and their families at the beginning of the program year (Tarullo et al. 2017), and changes in Head Start children’s family environments and developmental outcomes across the program year (Aikens et al. 2017a).

Head Start is a national program that promotes school readiness by enhancing the social-emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services to enrolled children and their families. The program places special emphasis on helping preschoolers develop the reading, language, social-emotional, mathematics, and science skills they need to be successful in school. It also seeks to engage parents in their children’s learning and to promote progress toward the parent’s own educational, literacy, and employment goals (Administration for Children and Families 2015). The Head Start program aims to achieve these goals by providing comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children and their families through grants to local public agencies and to private nonprofit and for-profit organizations.

## **METHODS**

For FACES 2014, we selected a sample of Head Start programs from the 2012–2013 Head Start Program Information Report, with two centers per program and two classrooms per center. Within each classroom, we randomly selected 12 children for the study. In total, 60 programs, 119 centers, 247 classrooms, and 2,462 children participated in fall 2014. More information on the study methodology and measurement in FACES 2014 and tables for findings presented here are available in the “Fall 2014 Data Tables and Study Design” report (Aikens et al. 2017b). In addition, this brief is accompanied by a set of appendix tables with descriptive data that are not included in the fall 2014 data table set. The sample used for this brief includes 1,908 children enrolled in Head Start in fall 2014,<sup>14</sup> with a focus on those children who are defined as DLLs. All findings are weighted to represent this population.

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## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> For the second and third research questions, we describe how DLLs differ from non-DLLs in Head Start, reporting differences that are statistically significant at the .05 level and lower. To assess whether there are statistically significant differences by DLL status, we conducted t-tests.

<sup>2</sup> Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>3</sup> The direct child assessment in FACES begins with a language screening to determine whether children who most often use a language other than English at home (based on information provided on the parent consent form) demonstrate sufficient English ability to be assessed in English. Two subtests from the Preschool Language Assessment Survey 2000 (preLAS 2000; Duncan and DeAvila 1998), Simon Says and Art Show, are used as the language screener tools. In this brief, children who are assessed in English comprise (1) children who most often use a language other than English or Spanish at home and who make 12 or fewer errors on the direct assessment language screener and therefore are assessed in English and (2) children who most often use Spanish at home and make 12 or fewer errors on the direct assessment language screener and are primarily assessed in English (with some Spanish measures also administered).

<sup>4</sup> Regardless of performance on the language screener, children who most often use Spanish at home (as defined on the parent consent for the purposes of the direct assessment) are administered a measure of English receptive vocabulary, Spanish receptive vocabulary, and conceptual expressive vocabulary. Therefore, they all receive some components of the assessment in English, Spanish, and conceptually. This approach provides information on children's vocabulary in the typical language of instruction in Head Start (English) and in the language they most often use at home (Spanish). There are limited measures available for children who most often use a language other than English or Spanish at home, and we are unable to adopt a similar approach with these children.

<sup>5</sup> Prior Head Start exposure refers to children's participation in preschool Head Start and does not include Early Head Start.

<sup>6</sup> Eighteen percent of DLLs are both 4 years old and newly entering Head Start.

<sup>7</sup> We prepared an indicator of parent immigrant status that has three categories—both parents born outside of the United States, one parent born outside the United States, and both parents born in the United States. Here, we present statistics for the category in which both parents are born outside of the United States.

<sup>8</sup> FACES collects information on parent depressive symptoms from the respondent who completes the parent survey. In fall 2014, 84 percent of respondents were biological or adoptive mothers, 8 percent were biological or adoptive fathers, and the remainder were other household members.

<sup>9</sup> Household income is not used to estimate eligibility for Head Start. Head Start qualifying criteria are based on family (not household) income, and there are other (non-income) ways to qualify for the program.

<sup>10</sup> The federal poverty threshold for a family of four in 2013 was \$23,834.

<sup>11</sup> This difference, although statistically significant, is very small and may not be considered practically meaningful. The effect size is smaller than .25 as measured by Hedges' g.

<sup>12</sup> The financial strain scale is derived from four items that measure the extent to which a family feels they have enough money to afford the kind of home, clothing, food, and medical care they need. A family "reported a financial strain" if a parent disagreed or strongly disagreed that the family had enough money to afford a home, clothing, food, or medical care. A family "did not report a financial strain" if they agreed or strongly agreed that the family had enough to afford a home, clothing, food, or medical care.

<sup>13</sup> The FACES 2014 Parent Survey included the short form of the Center for Epidemiologic Studies—Depression Scale (CES-D), a psychosocial measure. The short form includes 12 items on a 4-point scale for frequency in the past week. Total scores range from 0 to 36. Scores ranging from 0 to 4 are coded as not depressed, from 5 to 9 as mildly depressed, from 10 to 14 as moderately depressed, and 15 and above as severely depressed. The CES-D is a screening tool and not a diagnostic tool, but scores have been correlated with clinical diagnosis.

<sup>14</sup> In fall 2014, there were 2,462 children who participated in the FACES study. The sample included in this research brief is smaller because it excludes children that did not have a completed parent survey, child assessment, or teacher child report in the fall.

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